NORTH-EAST INDIA HISTORY ASSOCIATION

XXIst Annual Session
2000



Editor :
G P SINGH

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
MANIPUR UNIVERSITY

SOUVENIR

NORTH-EAST INDIA HISTORY ASSOCIATION

XXIST ANNUAL SESSION

(9-11 November, 2000)



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
MANIPUR UNIVERSITY
CANCHIPUR, IMPHAL

EDITOR : **G P SINGH**

Souvenir : Published on the occasion of the XXIst Annual Session of the North-East India History Association, Department of History, Manipur University, Canchipur, Imphal

OUR ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

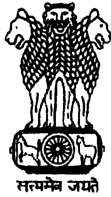
We acknowledge our gratitude to His Excellency Shri Ved Marwah, the Governor of Manipur and Chancellor, Manipur University, Shri W Nipamacha Singh, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Manipur, Dr L Chandramani Singh, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister, Manipur, Prof Gangmumei Kamei, Minister (Forest, Environment and Law), Manipur, Shri Samuel Jendai, Minister (TDBC/Hills), Shri Haokholet Kipgen, Minister (Transport), Manipur, Dr Khasim Ruivah, Minister, (Tourism, Science & Technology), Shri Govindas Konthoujam, Minister (Power), Manipur. Dr W. Thoiba Singh, Minister (Cooperation, Arts & Culture), Manipur, Director, Planning Department and his staff, Manipur, Director, Arts & Culture and his staff, Manipur, Manipur State Archaeology, Manipur, State Archives, Assistant General Manager, Main Branch, S.B.I. Imphal, Branch Manager, S.B.I. M.U. Campus. Prof H Tombi Singh, Vice-Chancellor, Manipur University, members of the faculty, History, all contributors to the *Souvenir*, Members of the Organising Committee, members of the Editorial Board, Advertising and Contributing Agencies, the concerned press people and others for the help and cooperation needed.

Edited by G P Singh, Deptt of History, Manipur University, and printed at Iboyaima Printers, Imphal, on behalf of the Organising Committee, the XXIst Annual NEIHA Session, Manipur University.

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The views expressed by the authors are their own, and the editorial board is in no way responsible for them.

Raj Bhavan
Imphal



Governor of Manipur



Message

I am happy to learn that the department of history, Manipur University, Canchipur, is organising the 21st Session of the North East India History Association (NEIHA) from 9-11 November, 2000 at the Manipur University, Imphal and a souvenir is being brought out to commemorate the occasion.

History is not merely a record of the past; it is a chronicle of change, an explanation of how and why changes occur. To understand the psyche of a nation or a region it is very essential to understand and appreciate the correct history of the region. On the other hand the distortion of history to meet the requirements of personal agenda must never be allowed.

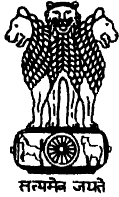
The present era of competition based on 'survival of the fittest' calls for nothing short of pursuit of excellence at every level. The students and faculty members of the Manipur University must endeavour with renewed vigour to achieve this goal.

I send my best wishes for the success of the conference.

Ved Marwah

(Ved Marwah)

Imphal, November 02, 2000



Chief Minister
Manipur



Message

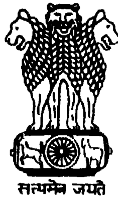
It gives me great pleasure to learn that the 21st Annual Session of North East India History Association (NEIHA) is being organised at Manipur University, Canchipur, Imphal from November 9 to 11, 2000 and a Souvenir is also being brought out on the occasion.

The most peculiar feature of the North East India is its plural character The region consisting of hill and plains, inhabited by various heterogenous ethnic groups is really fascinating. The hills areas alone have more than a hundred Tribes of Mongoloid origin, with each group of Tribes having its own distinct language, culture, and dialects The constant search for history of the region is an old obsession of historians; no wonder, the last words has yet to be said on it. Scholars, researchers and curious investigators having been occasionally delving deep into the past if only to find the missing links in the history of the region. The holding of the 21st Session of the North East India History Association, in Manipur University, Canchipur will undoubtedly help the scholars to uncover the secret pathways to history. I am sure the Session will leave a deep imprint of knowledge on the minds of scholars which will facilitate them in exploring of new and wider horizons of the history of the region and rediscover the old world

I wish the venture all success.

W. Nipamacha Sh
2/11/2000

(W. Nipamacha Singh)



Deputy Chief Minister
Manipur

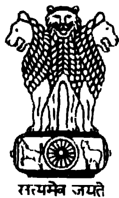


Message

I come to know that the Department of History, Manipur University, Imphal is bringing out a SOUVENIR on the occasion of the 21st Annual Session of the North East India History Association, 9-11 November, 2000. On this occasion, historians and social scientists will again assemble to interact on different aspects of the regional history of North East India. Their studies and findings, I hope, will be of immense value of both the academicians and administrators of the region.

I wish the Seminar a grand success.

(Dr. L. Chandramani Singh)



MINISTER
Law, Forests & Environment
Manipur



Imphal,
the 30th October, 2000

Message

I have been closely associated with the North East India History Association (NEIHA) for the last two decades. I am happy that the 21st Annual Session of the NEIHA is being held at the Manipur University.

NEIHA is a forum of all historians and anybody interested in History. And these days everybody is involved in History writing and History making. A Souvenir is published on this occasion.

I congratulate the History Department of Manipur University, for holding the 21st Session in the first year of the 21st Century.

Gangmumei Kamei

(Gangmumei Kamei)

Imphal, October 22, 2000



Vice-Chancellor

Message

I am happy to learn that the Department of History, Manipur University, is organising the Twenty-first Session of the Northeast India History Association from November 9-11, 2000.

The Northeast India History Association, founded in 1980, to provide a common forum for the historians and scholars of the region, has been playing a very vital role and its annual sessions are popularly regarded as a History Congress of the Northeast.

The Association provides the essential forum to provide motivation and inspiration to the scholars in making the study of history a movement.

I wish the Association and the Annual Session all success.

(H. Tombi Sinmgh)
Vice-Chancellor

EDITORIAL

It is great pleasure on my part to do a little service to North-East India History Association (NEIHA) on the occasion of its twenty-first session by way of editing this souvenir. This affords me an opportunity to revive the memory of my association with NEIHA since the day of its foundation.

The articles included in the souvenir are of varied nature. Some of them are quite befitting to the occasion and some of general nature. Since they cover different themes, it was not possible to arrange them thematically. They are less in number but not poor in contents as I do believe. We owe an apology to those authors whose articles could not be included therein because of their late submission. We could not bring the souvenir to the level of our expectation due to time constraint and other hazards, which we really regret. However, we are thankful to all those who helped us directly or indirectly in bringing out it on time.

I crave the readers' indulgence for any blemishes and errors of omission and commission which are discernible, although no pains have been spared to set everything in order.

(G P Singh)
Editor

MANIPUR UNIVERSITY: A PROFILE

By Krishnan Subramaniam

"Education: a debt due from present to future generations"

— George Peabody

Overview

Manipur is one of the northeastern states of India. Its boundary is surrounded by Myanmar (Burma) in the east and south, Nagaland in the north, Cachar (Assam) in the west, and Mizoram in the south-west. Manipur is a meeting point between South East Asia and the Indian sub-continent. Manipur is an evergreen valley in the middle of parallel rows of hill-ranges rising from 700 to 2000 metres above the sea level — Latitude: 23.80^{0}N to 25.68^{0}N, Longitude: 93.03^{0}E to 94.98^{0}E, Altitude: Imphal 790 metres above sea level, Total Area: 22,327 sq. km., Population: 18,37149. More than sixty percent of its inhabitants — *Meiteis* including Brahmins *(Bamons)* and Muslims *(Pangals)* — are settled mostly in the valley. The rest are hill-people belonging to *Tangkhul, Thadou, Zeliangrong (Zemi, Laingmai, Roungmei-Kabuis), Mao, Maram, Poumai, Paite, Hmar, Maring, Anal, Aimol, Angami, Chiru, Chothe, Gangte, Monsang, Moyon, Kom, Purum, Ralte, Sema, Simte, Salte, Vaiphei, Lamgang, Zhou*, tribes.

The kaleidoscopic landscape, rich flora and fauna, exotic and indigenous orchids, most threatened species of animals, brow antlered deer, indigenous and migratory birds, fertile valley, sparkling lakes, hilly streams and water falls, forests, Siroi Kasom hill ranges, Dzuko valley (a dream land for botanists and naturalists), historical and archaeological importance, cultural, literary and historical wealth, indigenous games, festivities, and

the salubrious climate throughout the year — have all won for this State a very distinctive position in the country.

Set in this gorgeous landscape is Manipur University. The university was established on the 5th June 1980 under Manipur University Act, 1980 (Manipur Act No. 8 of 1980) with territorial jurisdiction over the whole of Manipur. The University is a teaching-cum-affiliating University. The erstwhile Centre for Postgraduate Studies, Imphal of the Jawaharlal Nehru University formed the nucleus of Manipur University.

Manipur University Campus is located at Canchipur and spread over an area of 333 acres, on the western side of the National Highway No. 39 (Indo-Myanmar Road), at a distance of 8 km., from Imphal city. Canchipur, also known as Langthabal, is a place of great historical importance — being the site of the palace of Maharaja Gambhir Singh and Maharaja Nara Singh in the 19th Century. The University's motto is "**knowledge is wisdom**" — *Dyo-yo-nah Prajodayat*. The University strives for excellence and relevance in education and to prepare the scholars to capitalise their education, inquisitiveness, character-formation, determination and dynamism.

The objectives of the University are to:

- foster the composite culture of India and establish such departments or institutions as may be required for the study and development of languages, art and culture of India, and in particular those of the northeastern region of the country
- promote an awareness of the right cultural tradition of Manipur which is a national heritage and is an example of happy blending of the cultures of India and Southeast Asia; and provide for the study of the culture of Manipur in this wider context
- take special measures to facilitate students and teachers from all over India to join the University to participate in its academic programmes
- promote in the students and teachers an understanding of the social needs of the country, and the northeastern region of India in particular, and prepare them for fulfilling such needs

- make special provision for integrated courses in humanities, science and technology in the educational programmes of the University
- establish such departments or institutions as may be necessary for the study of languages, literature and life of foreign countries with a view to inculcating in the students a world perspective and international understanding, and
- promote a spirit of humanism, of tolerance, of social justice and the fellowship of faiths, of reason and the spirit of free enquiry in the search of truth, and a scientific approach to the problems of the society.

Academic

The university, during the last two decades (1980-1999) has played a significant and vital role in promoting higher education in the State — thanks to the active participation, diligent and selfless services of its dedicated members of the academia. The nine departments of studies taken over from the Jawaharlal Nehru University's Postgraduate Centre have now grown into following three distinct schools of studies with twenty-two faculties.

School of Humanities	:	Departments of English, Hindi, Linguistics, Manipuri and Philosophy
School of Science	:	Departments of Anthropology, Biochemistry, Chemistry, Computer Science, Earth Science, Geography, Life Sciences, Mathematics, Physics and Statistics
School of Social Science	:	Departments of Commerce, Economics, Education, History, Library & Information Science, Management Studies, Political Science

The postgraduate departments offer courses leading to the award of Master's degree in Arts, Science, Commerce, Computer Applications, Business Administration, as well as the degrees of Master of Philosophy

and Doctor of Philosophy, Postgraduate Diploma in Computer Applications, Certificate courses in Human Rights, Adult Education, etc.

Today, the university has faculty strength of 160, compared with the strength of fifty-eight in 1980 and student strength of about 3000 against 300 in 1980.

The University has proven and worthy faculty members, capable of undertaking research, teaching and co-curricular activities. Our faculty members have contributed their best to the cause of higher education. They have participated in many international and national seminars and have published books and research articles in both international and national journals of repute. They have been able to attract a large number of research grants from various agencies. We are proud that our departments are, to a large extent, equipped better, thanks to the grants our faculty could fetch from the agencies rather than from the grants that the university could provide from its own sources to develop the required infrastructure. The efforts of the faculty have borne fruits in providing more and more research fellowships than what the university could afford out of its own resources. Many of our faculty have won well deserved recognitions by receiving awards for research fellowships/associate-ships, grants and also prestigious awards like Sahitya Akademy/President's Award, etc., including awards for pursuing research in national and international institutions of repute. It is encouraging to note that both the teachers and research scholars of the university have taken up research projects that are related to the problems of development and nation building and continue to deal with subjects which are not only of academic relevance but also of value to the policy planners. The University has so far awarded Ph D degrees to over 400 scholars.

Besides these faculties, the University has also established the following specialised departments of teaching and research and development centres, chiefly to meet the requirements of the region and the State.

Library: The university library has a total collection of 1,01,201 volumes of books and 250 maps. The library subscribes to 266 periodicals/journals and twenty-eight newspapers. It offers COPSAT services of INFLIBNET and NCSI, which include about 4000 foreign titles. The library has INFLIBNET and INTERNET facilities.

Audio Visual Research Centre: The objectives of the Centre are to produce educational television programmes for enrichment of higher education through countrywide classroom programmes. The centre has a well-equipped studio, manned by well-trained and experienced professionals. The Centre has so far produced fifty-five educational programmes. The centre plans to produce at least twenty-four programmes in a year. Many of the programmes of the Centre have won awards and citations.

Audio Visual Language Laboratory: The laboratory has fifteen booths with five feedback facilities, a phonetic laboratory, projection unit and also a film and record library.

Department of Adult, Continuing Education and Extension: This department, being the third dimension of education, aims to promote a meaningful and sustained dialogue between the university and the community. It extends knowledge and other institutional resources to the community and provides insight to the knowledge resources and socio-economic realities. It has set up thirty adult education centres and twenty-nine population clubs in various parts of the State. It regularly organises seminars, workshops, training programmes, etc., as a part of its continuing education programmes.

Centre for Developmental Studies: This centre offers instructions and training in areas that are relevant to the needs of the society.

Computer Centre: The University has a well-equipped computer centre. This centre organises short-term courses for in-service trainees and develops specialised software for the management of the university and government offices. Facilities for pursuing "O" and "A" level computer courses of the Department of Electronics, Government of India are also available in the University. The university, with the assistance from the Department of Electronics, Government of India and the Northeastern Council, has set up a VSAT and has facilities of INTERNET through ERNET. The university will be launching its own web site very soon. The university has also proposals for campus networking. Soon the academic communities will have the full benefit of INTERNET for their teaching and research activities.

Centre for Manipuri Studies and Tribal Research: The University set up this centre with the main objective of promoting and encouraging the study and research in history, culture, languages, literature of the Northeast India and to promote the cause of cultural unity and integration, particularly in the vital and sensitive areas. In its first five years of existence, the Centre completed twenty-three projects and brought out the following publications.

Manipuri Studies: *Kakching Dialect, Khongjom Parba, Khongjom Parba Shakpi Ama: Oinam Smt Ibeni Devi, Imphal Dialect, Pena, Life-ways of Meitei Amaibis, A Contribution to the Study of Tone in Manipuri, Evolution of Manipuri Script, The Cheiraoba Festival of the Manipuris, The Hot & Cold: A Study of the early Seers and Puyas, The Calendaric Festivals of Manipur, Folk Beliefs and Practices of Manipur*

Tribal Research: *A Profile of Rongmei Naga, Bibliography on Tribal Studies, Tribal Profile of Manipur, Tribal Economic Development in Manipur during Plan period (1951-91), Population Studies of the Tribes of Manipur Transfer and Alienation of Tribal Land in Manipur, Polity Formation among the Tribes of Manipur (A Preliminary survey of the Moyon and Paite polity), Tarao Tribe of Manipur, The Marams of Manipur: An Ethnographic perspective, An Ethnographic Account of Mao Tribe*

The thrust areas recognised for further research are: Multi-disciplinary study of the Komlathabi village, Multi-disciplinary study of the Tangkhul/Maram/Mao/Maring/Anal tribes and the documentation of their music, dance, craft, costumes, etc., Rongmei language and literature, Nature and function of kinship and family among the hill tribes of Manipur, Ethno-history of Kom/Koireng/Thangal tribes, Socio-linguistics of Manipuri, Study of genetic relationships (cognates) of Manipuri with other Naga and Kuki languages spoken in Manipur, Life-cycle and rituals and ceremonies of Meiteis, Folk songs of Manipur, Folk medicine, Encyclopaedia of Manipuri Art and Life. Though the University Grants Commission has committed to meet the expenditure on the this centre for another five-years, the centre could not proceed with its action-plan because the Government of Manipur is yet to give its concurrence to the continuance of these studies/centre.

Museum: University Museum, which is a part of the Department of History, is multi-functional and is an aid to the scholars to study the various aspects of pre-historic archaeology, paleobotany, paleogeology, paleozoology, history and antiquities. The emphasis of the museum is on cultural and historical aspects. It has pre-historic and historic galleries. Selected facsimiles and manuscripts also form an important gallery. The museum has a collection of botanical, geological and zoological specimens. Besides the university museum, the departments of Anthropology and Earth Sciences also maintain a small museum each in their departments.

Undergraduate studies: The University has granted permanent affiliation to thirty-eight colleges, temporary affiliation to twenty-two colleges and permission to four colleges to run Bachelor's degree courses in Arts, Science and Commerce streams. The University has also granted affiliation to a medical college, two law colleges, three teachers' training colleges, three technical/engineering colleges and a college of physical education and sports. Of these colleges, the University Grants Commission has recognised thirty-eight colleges under Section 2(f) and 12(b) of its Act. The number of colleges affiliated to the University has gone up from twenty in 1980 to sixty-four with a student enrolment of over 30,000.

Vocational courses: The university has introduced the following vocational courses at the first degree level in its affiliated colleges: *Biological Techniques & Specimen Preparation, Domestic Animal Farming, Food Science & Quality Control, Functional English, Industrial Fish and Fisheries, Office Management & Secretarial Practice, Seed Technology, Sericulture, Still Photography & Audio Production, Tax Procedure & Practice, Tourism & Travel Management.*

Student Facilities: The University has necessary amenities to cater to the general welfare of the students. The University has facilities for extra-curricular, co-curricular and sports activities, promotion of participation in social activities and their residential life so as to encourage them to have a fruitful relationship between the intellectual and social life, and to contribute to their growth and development as mature and responsible citizens. The university regularly organises Sports Meets, Youth Festivals, and social and community activities through National Service Scheme. Our students have

a proven record of their prowess, not only in their studies and research, but also in their co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Many have won laurels in sports, dance, drama, and other socio-cultural activities like NSS, Adult Education, etc. The Health Centre of the University provides for the health care of the students.

Scholarships and Fellowships: The University offers one scholarship in each department for M Phil/Ph D students. Government of Manipur scholarships for general, scheduled cast/tribe communities are available. Scholarships awarded by the University Grants Commission and other Central Government agencies are also available. 20% of girls and 25% of boys enrolled in postgraduate classes are entitled free-ships. Gold Medals are awarded to meritorious students who secure first-class first position.

Department of History and the Northeast India History Association

The Northeast India History Association, founded in 1980, to provide a common forum for the historians and scholars of the region, has been playing a very vital role. Its annual sessions are regarded as the History Congress of the Northeast. The Association, besides holding annual sessions in the major university towns of the Northeast India, has brought out a number of publications. The Association provides the essential motivation and inspiration to the scholars and in making the study of history a movement.

The Department of History is one of the oldest departments. It was established in 1975 by the erstwhile Centre of Postgraduate Studies, Imphal and merged with the university in 1980. Since then the department has contributed remarkably to the growth of teaching and research. From the beginning, the department has given stress on research activities both by the students and teachers. It has produced more than 50 Ph D theses. It is worthwhile to mention here that the department's thrust area of research is regional history of Northeast India, with special reference to Manipur. The record of the department has been quite impressive and the first scholar to be awarded Ph D degree was from the department of History.

The Department of History is hosting the Twenty-first Session of the Northeast India History Association for the third time. The department hosted the third session in 1982 and the eleventh session in 1991. It is perhaps in recognition of the success of the department, the Association has entrusted the department with the responsibility of holding the twenty-first session.

Constraints

To fulfil the objectives enshrined in the Act of the University, it has ambitious plans to introduce Southeast Asian Studies, Women's Studies, Folklore Studies, Performing and Fine Art Centre, Sociology, Institute of Biotechnology, Science Instrumentation Centre, Distance Education, etc., to meet the ever increasing demands of the State and the Region for specialised human resources. In some cases the University Grants Commission has granted permission to introduce new disciplines. However, these have remained on the drawing boards for want of concurrence from the Government of Manipur. The University has INTERNET facilities. Yet, in the absence of campus network, it could not harness the potentials of INTERNET for its teaching and research programmes. The main constraint of the University is finance. The University is totally dependant on the grants-in-aid from the Government of Manipur. Unfortunately, when the university was established, neither the State nor the Central government placed adequate Foundation Grants at the disposal of the University, as is generally done everywhere at such instances. The Government of Manipur, despite their efforts, could not meet even the basic minimum requirements of the University.

Conclusion

The university has devoted members of faculty, scholars and staff, with proven ability in national and international fora. Within the last twenty years (1981-2000) the University has shown impressive achievement in the field of teaching and research. The university community do have the capability and capacity to make Manipur University known as an institution of Excellence in Higher Education, devoted to the needs of the society and people. We hope, the government and the people would pay due attention to equip the University with necessary infrastructure to pay our debts to our future generations.

3

An Introduction to the History of History from Vedic Antiquity to Modern Times

The history of history is a systematic record of evolution of different ideas, thoughts, perceptions, principles, laws, forms, kinds, constituents, theories and schools of history. JT Shotwell puts it in a different way: "The history of the history is the story of that deepening memory and scientific curiosity which is the measure of our social consciousness and of our intellectual life" *(Introduction to the History of History).*

The earliest allusion to *itihãsa,* the nearest equivalent Sanskrit word for history (derivative of the Greek word "Historia"), occurs in the later Vedic text- *Atharvaveda.* It literally means "thus it happened" or "so indeed it was". *Itihãsa* (past events), *purãṇa* (any old tale or ancient lore) and *ãkhyãna* (narratives) constitute the three rudimentary specimens of history. They contained the seeds of history. Both *itihãsa* and *purãṇa* signifies record of the past. They provide traditional account of past events. They have been mentioned conjointly in the Vedic, Epic and *Purãṇic* literature. The traditional history of India has been presented in *itihãsa-purãṇa* tradition. The three legitimate constituents of this tradition were myth, genealogy and historical narrative. This tradition profoundly influenced the historical thoughts and writings in ancient India. Toynbee, a well known British historian, in his monumental work, *A Study of History* (in 12 Vols), has correctly stated that history grew out of myth, fiction, stories, legends and tradition. The emergence of six constituents of *itihãsa* or history, *viz; purãṇa,* itivrittta (an account of past events, a narrative or story), *ãkhyãyikã* (biography of a historical personage), *udãharana* (an illustration), the *Dharmaśãstra* (law) and the *Arthaśãstra* (science of polity or state and government) in the fourth century BC is attributed to *Kauṭilya.* The importance of dynastic history, genealogies and chronology was first realised by the ancient

Purāṇakāras of India. The composition of historical biographies and chronicles in India between the seventh and eighteenth century gave fillip to biographical study as well as historical studies in chronicles. *Kalhaṇa* (12th century AD), a chronicler of Kashmir and the best of all ancient historians of India, first emphasised the need of a thorough critical examination of all past records for producing a historical work. His historical principles and laws were further followed by the Kashmiri chroniclers of the medieval age. He was the forerunner of many Indian historians in the realm of debunking the truth from falsehood. He is often compared with Herodotus of Greece. The historians of three prominent schools, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Kashmir, left indelible imprint of their historical genius on the thoughts and writings of the succeeding generations of Indian historians. The Buddhist and Jain historians of India also gave impetus to the writings of biographies and preservation of dynastic genealogies and chronology. The Buddhists presented history mainly in the form of an *Avadāna* and the Jains in the forms of *Paṭṭāvalis* (political succession lists), *Rājāvalis* (Chronicles of kings), *Prabandhas* (historical narratives) etc. Their works virtually made the earlier history of ancient India richer. The traditional Indian concept of history went on changing with developing historical sense, prevailing historical tradition in a contemporary age and events of the time.

Historiography became by and large regional in character in medieval India. Regional histories gradually started assuming significance. They are to a considerable extent complementary to national history.

The writing of local chronicles in Rajasthan and Kashmir in the north, Sindh, Gujarat and Maharastra in the west and in Orissa, Assam, Manipur and Tripura in the east in different forms during the medieval period, and of historical biographies in almost all parts of India including the south during all the three periods of history were the two significant stages in the evolution of Indian historiography. Though the Chinese historian Ssu-ma Chien (c 145-85 BC) was the first to initiate the tradition of biographical writing by dealing with the lives of a number of eminent personalities (all his contemporaries) in his *magnum opus*, the *Shih-Chi*, it is the Greek Plutarch (c A.D 50-125), the author of the *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, who got universal recognition as a "father of biography". The Roman Tacitus

(*c* A.D 55-120) also produced a work, *Life of Agricola*. The different traditions of biographical writing which evolved in China, Greece, Rome and India in different ages went a long way in according the biographical history a place it deserves.

The establishment of certain basic principles and laws of history in the classical tradition also deserves our notice. Hecataeus (*c* 549-486 BC) was the first among the early Greek historians to lay emphasis on two fundamental principles of historiography, *viz*; truthfulness and critical examination of the conventional myths which find reflection in one of his works: *Book of Local Genealogies*. Nearly twenty Greek historians including predecessors and contemporaries of Herodotus (*c* 484-425 BC), the so- called "Father of History", concentrated their attention mainly on political histories of Greece and Persia. It is the political history which received the highest attention of Herodotus as evidenced by the description of Graeco-Persian war and other political events in his *Historia* (in nine volumes). He presented history combining in himself the qualities of a historian and skills of a literary artist and story-teller. Thucydides (*c* 456-396 BC) laid stress on objectivity in the presentation of political history as reflected in his *The History of the Peloponnesian War*. The later Greek writers of the early period produced histories of mixed nature dealing with society, economy, polity, etc. of different countries including India. In fact, the ancient Greeks wrote history of all characters, literary, social, economic, political, biographical, universal, annals, local chronicles and memoirs. They were the originators of the history in the modern sense of the term. They first learnt the art of writing real history, and perceived its purpose, meaning and laws. The two distinguished Roman historians, Livy (*c* 59 BC-AD 17) and Tacitus (*c* AD 55-120), emphatically asserted that a historian has to present history by keeping himself free from bias and pride and prejudice. It is noteworthy that the art of writing a biography developed in Greece and Rome in the first and second centuries of the Christian era. *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* by the Greek Plutarch and the *Life of Agricola* by the Roman Tacitus mentioned before, are "the best specimens of historical biography that the ancient world produced".

As in ancient India so in Greece and Rome history developed as a branch of literature. To the Greeks and Romans also history was an art and not a

critical science, as stated by JW Thompson *(A History of Historical Writing)*, J B Bury *(The ancient Greek Historians)*, Stephen Usher *(The Historians of Greece and Rome)* and AL Rowse *(The use of History)*. However, it cannot be denied that history attained a new status and high dignity at their hands.

The development of history as art and science has also a history. The treatment of history as an art at the hands of historians at global level continued till the end of the seventeenth century AD, as stated by Thompson. In fact, history retained its artistic value in the following two centuries also. Voltaire of France, and Hume (1711-1776), Gibbon (1737-1794), the author of *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* Macaulay (1800-1858), the author of *History of England*, and Carlyle (1795-1881), the author of *French Revolution*, of England have been called both historians and "literary artists." JR Seeley (1834-1895) and JB Bury (1861-1927), the two noted historians of Cambridge School, persistently went on saying that "History is a Science, no less and no more" from the standpoint of truth, exactness, accuracy and objectivity. GM Trevelyan (1876-1962), the famous British historian and author of a unique work, *Clio: A Muse*, consistently opposed their view and firmly stood for history both as a science and as an art, arguing that if the former discovers the truth the latter deals with social and cultural factors in human life. He further contended that literary history is not unscientific. GJ Renier *(History: Its Purpose and Method)* repeatedly told that "History is a story, no more and no less". Rowse also pleaded for an artistic history in the sense that a historian needs to be an artist to narrate the events. Toybee has aptly remarked: ".... no historian can be great if he is not also a great artist". Actor, Renan and others were for both scientific and literary history. As a matter of fact, Bury's and Seeley's persistency of the treatment of history only as a science and Trevelyan's and others' advocacy of history as a science and art resulted in legitimization of both scientific and literary interpretation of facts. The presentation of history both ways depending on the themes, context and time still holds good. RG Collingwood is absolutely justified in holding that "Instead of the historians choosing the subject, the subject chooses the historian" *(The Idea of History)*. The prevailing attitudes in any age are the most important factors in guiding the historian in the treatment of his subject. This is what H.E. Barnes has highlighted again and again in his *A History of Historical Writing.*

The different branches of history sprang forth in different ages from defferent philosophical and historical thoughts and assumed relative importance.

Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), one of the greatest Muslim historians, saw a unity and continuity in historical development. He maintained that like the individual organism the history undergoes constant changes. He advocated that history is concerned with the whole range of socio-cultural development of the people.

The idealists and positivists represent two broad schools of historical thought. B Croce (1866-1952) of Italy, an idealist philosopher and a historian, in his *History as the Story of Liberty* pointed out that historian's task is not only to chronicle the past events but also to deal with socio-cultural problems, and as an artist he is to apply his imagination and freedom. The idealists stood for autonomy of history. The historians of positivist School emphasized the importance of only political history ignoring the history of religion, culture and art. Karl Popper of that school propounded the theory that history is concerned with what people did and not what they failed to do. The historians of romantic school laid emphasis on the entire history of man as a single process of development. The two German philosophers, Kant (1724-1804) and Hegel (1770-1831), made a rational analysis of historiography as the logical development of human civilization. Karl Marx (1818-1883) viewed history in the light of socio-economic transformation in the lives of men. The economic factors got prominence over other factors involved in the socio-economic development of the people. The economic history developed only in the nineteenth century. It is worthy of remark that without social history economic history is barren and without the both the cultural history unintelligible.

For the beginning of a new era of critical historiography in modern times the credit goes to the renowned German historian Ranke (1814-1836).

GR Elton in his *The Practice of History* put emphasis on the study of the individual history with datable events. Those who popularised the study and writing of intellectual history include Karl Lamprecht (1856-1915) of Leipzig and JH Robinson (1863-1936).

All kinds of history, social, economic, political, religious, cultural, biographical and intellectual received the attention of different historians in different countries. Each of them has its own value. L. Gottschalk in his *Understanding History- A Premier of Historical Method*, has rightly pointed out that history whether large (about the very earliest civilization) or small (about knowledge of the early man) has its value.

The history we have today has its own history. It is not the product of one age or one brain. There are successive stages of its development. It has had an organic development. Its constituents, ramifications, etc. are the legacies of the past experiences of several centuries. Its body has been shaped by the historians of different schools that flourished in different ages in different countries and by the thoughts of historical schools of the period ranging from the Vedic age to modern times. " .... history is what the historian makes" (EH Carr, *What is History ?*). P. Smith in his *The Historians and History* has also expressed more or less the same view.

TOWARDS CAPTURING THE PAST: SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE NATURE OF HISTORICAL STUDIES

By Soyam Lokendrajit

A field of inquiry or discipline is identified by its subject matter and method. The frontiers of the subject matter may not be clearly fixed, but the outline is there. Embarking upon a discipline is like mapping a landscape. From a distance, one feels the outline. The details are clearer as one proceeds nearer so much so that the outline is lost in the details.

Revolution in a discipline occurs in two ways

(a) A hitherto unknown phenomenon is discovered and the frontier of inquiry are expanded.

(b) New techniques are discovered for studying the same phenomenon, giving new angles and results.

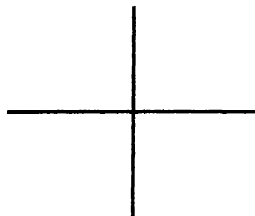
The development of historical studies have been marked both by these two kinds of change.

What then is the subject-matter of History ?

Let us begin by wondering at the outline first, the Past.

The Past ? What is it ?

The Past is certainly pregnant with a Time dimension. If I am allowed a geometric representation of the 'historical Time', then I will take two lines, one vertical and the other horizontal in intersection.



The vertical line represents the 'arrow of Time' which is irreversible and moves in one direction only. The horizontal line represents the synchronic aspect of time, the simultaneity of events in time.

Time is real only when there is an observer, (a clock, shall we say ?). The possibility of historical studies is inherent in the capacity of human imagination to travel in both the direction of the arrow of Time and also to occupy the synchronic temporal space. In a sense, every man is a historian in so far as he carries a consciousness of Time with him.

Let us assume that our Historian occupies a point in the flow of Time and outlines the Past from this standpoint.

Naturally, he has all natural history (leading to the advent of man), rolled into one, before him. The primaveal Chaos harmonised into a symphony that we now call cosmos will not escape the notice of our Historian. For, that is how the stage was prepared for the *dramatis personae* of History, Man Himself.

Fred Hoyle, in his Frontiers of Astronomy has said that a slight change in the size of the sun would have mattered to man more than all the political problems of the world put together. How important it is to look at natural history as the background that illumines our study of man !

Next, we have the emergence of Bio-Sphere, Nature's technology leading to the emergence of man. Darwin's contribution had been to discern Nature's technology from a hindsight.

Then, with the emergence of man, a new dimension is added. Nature is becoming conscious of herself. In other words, Nature's children are becoming both self-conscious and conscious of Nature. In man we have a being capable of production and reproduction (teleonomy in Jacques Monod's Chance and Necessity) - a being capable of living in Past and Future- in short a *historical* being. It is with Him that History in the technical sense we are using, comes into being. 'The Past' of History in this much sector of natural History. The Past- not a static something- but a process, a fluid something.

Certainly, there is an universal matrix of History. Yet it is expressed in such a unique, individuated instances that History can very well be regarded as a science of the universal and the particular both.

Thus, we have the Past, the subject matter of History.

Compare it, say, with our perception of pole star. Physicists tell us that the pole star we are seeing today, is the pole star of many light years ago. It is not the present pole star but a past one. Our perception is constructing an object many years after its existence.

Is our construction of the Past same as the perceptual construction of pole star ?

No. Because historians have not been applying the same mechanism of construction so far. Hence, the Past is never wholly constructed, it is constructed only from a standpoint.

Let us call the Past buried in Time, the objective Past.

The Past constructed by the Historian the constructed Past.

All documents used in the construction, the raw-materials.

The method of construction, the method of History.

Let us now reflect more deeply into the nature of the relation between what is constructed and the materials out of which the construction is made.

To be sure, there is no relation of logical entailment. Given a set of colours, you don't determine their combination but only a possibility of combination.

The construction is made even more delicate by the fact that it is not confined to the phenomenological level only. The historian has to take account of motives, purposes, social structures, forces of production, world outlook- in short- man in ideal and material creations, I emphasize again and again, what History is constructing is not a thing, but a very fluid and subtle process. What is observable is not the whole of Reality that history studies. A historical account is not logically equivalent to the sum total of events and happenings.

Here I quite agree with the view that an overemphasis on the collection of historical material, mechanically done, is mind bogging. It blocks our creative imagination so important in understanding History. History is not simply food gathering of facts. History is also a science of making brute facts narrate their tale.

But facts will not come to life and narrate their tale unless we apply the magic wand, namely, the tool of a conceptual framework. History the Sleeping Beauty waits for him who wields this magic wand. History has been dubbed subjective, His Story so to say, because the historian uses a conceptual framework not only in the interpretation but also in the selection of facts.

So the whole question of objectivity in History centres around the issue, to what extent the use of such a concpetual framework is subjective and to what extent it is objective ?

Before I come to the epistemological issue, I must dwell on the ideological issue.

The ideological issue is simply this; for reasons of State, or powers that be or even collective Ego History is made to tell lies as usual. For example, the existence of so called colonial, nationalist and secular national integrationist schools of writing Indian History is a clear intrusion of ideology in the conceptual framework of historical studies. The crucial issue, therefore, is; is it possible to have a conceptual framework free from ideology ? The problem is not one of the individual historian's idiosyncrasies; it is one of method, whether there can be any objective method free from ideological determinations that can render study of History a systematic one. The irony of History writing is that, so far we have not able to argue for ideology free conceptual framework.

The other epistemological issue is about the nature of relation between propositions of History and the evidence adduced in their favour. Even if we gloss over the point that the historian's evidence is selected by an ideologically conditioned conceptual framework, the relation between the evidence and the propositions they claim to support still remain problematic. The relation certainly is not one of logical entailment. Is it one of lending degrees of reasonable support ? But then how we identify objectively the degrees of reasonableness. These are tough questions a serious student of History must answer to make good the claim of objectivity in historical studies.

PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY OF MANIPUR

By Dr Kunjeswori

The quaternary period, particularly that of the Pleistocene shows the gradual emergence of man from the intricate web of evolutionary development that had occupied about two million years before present. It has a special significance in Prehistoric archaeology as this period witnessed that evolution and development of man, the tool maker and development of human cultures.

Prehistory deals with the story of man and everything that concerned him from that dim remote moment when he first emerged from his animal ancestry until the time when the existence of written record leads the investigator into the realm of history. Hence one can rightly say that the study of the most challenging subject as he has to study and to reconstruct the history of man from the unwritten records.

The stone age culture of this region can broadly be divided into two sections, i.e. Pre-Neolithic and Neolithic. Pre-Neolithic includes Paleolithic and Haobinhian.

The cultural remains of Prehistory can be divided into for groups viz. stone and bone tools, potsherds and Megalithic monuments. At the very outset, it must be made clear that in absence of any positive evidence it is not possible to determine the exact date of the available antiquities. However, keeping in view the fact that Manipur like some other parts of north-eastern region had already appeared on the Prehistoric map of India, the rich Neolithic tradition of Manipur and its impact on neighbouring areas has also been acknowledged by H. Dani. Neolithic culture is extended upto the Cachar hills, which probably imbibed from Burma through Manipur. There are some artifacts, whose antiquity can tentatively be placed in the protohistoric period.

Pre-Neolithic or Palaeolithic : Pre-Neolithic tools have been discovered from the hilly areas. In this field O.K. Singh is the pioneer and

he discovered palaeolithic tools for the first time from Khangkhui limestone caves, near Khangkhui Khullen situated 11 kms. south east of Ukhrul Town, Ukhrul District, Manipur. A stream, which is a tributary of Thoubal river flows near the foot hill of the hillock. Thus the site was suitable for habitation and settlement as source of water and area for shelter played important role during the prehistoric period.

There are three caves, among which two are on the eastern slope of the hill and third one on the western slope. From one of the cave of eastern slope a trial trench was undertaken by O.K. Singh (1969) and discovered many stone artifacts, bone tools and faunal remains. A chopper of South East Asian type, handaxe, spear heads, scrapers of different types, blade, burins, borers, flakes, points, knife, tabular flakes and large fluted core of sand stone were discovered. The other remains found along with these tools are animal bones and teeth of harvivorous animal. It is replaced by 63.5 cm. thick pale brown soil which contained points, blade, burin, flake and small fluted cores and many bone tools, blade, scraper and points etc. It is finally capped by 17.8 cm. thick dark brown tonged points, burins and varieties of scrapers.

From the study and observation of soil profile it is suggested that there were two shelters of wet phase and a longer dry phase which are supported by the discovery of tools of harvivorous bone and teeth in the first and third layers. The tools are mostly flakes without platform in some cases the flakes exhibit longitudinal mid-ridge and cortex also on them. The bone industry comprises various types of tools, points, scrappers, chisels, perforated and blunted back knife. A big chopping tool with a handle of unique type was also collected from the surface of the cave of the western slope. These findings highlight that the people of that time knew hunting. From the Mesolithic or late Stone Age phase people did hunting and knew how to grow plants and also they had advanced knowledge of technology in the field of making tools.

The faunal remains found from these caves, were identified by Dr. Badam (O.K. Singh, 1980), who concluded that these belong to Cervus Sus Bovide and wild fowls. These species can be dated older than Late Pleistocene, which could be compared with that of the faunal remains of Karnool cave in Andhra Pradesh. Again, the stone tool industry found in Manipur is comparable with that of the Choukoutien culture of China. Thus both the

industries are based on the manufacture of core and flake implements and flakes with a bevelled edge of Khangkhui cave are not found anywhere. These types might have been a local development while others are of foreign origin. This type of cave is one of the most interesting one among the caves of North-Eastern India with which both bone and stone tools are associated. Thus from the above discussion the antiquity of Khangkhui caves goes back to that of Late Quaternary.

From Machi Village in Tengnoupal District, am unifacial tool was collected. Typo-Technologically it can be compared with that of North-West India, Himachal Pradesh and South-East Asia. Sajik Tampak, Chandel District is also one of the Palaeolithic site.

The Archaeological exploration undertaken in 1979 by the Department of State Archaeology, Government of Manipur and then in 1981 jointly by the said Department and another team including the writer in "The Committee on Writing Regional Composite History of Manipur" at Tharon cave site 4 kms. towards the north of Tharon village have resulted in the discovery of five Prehistoric caves yielding edge ground pebble tools, Megalithic monuments and rock engravings.

There are five caves at this site. A stream also runs along the southern site of the cave. One of these caves is very long and branches in fourteen bifurcated passages and opens towards the stream. Upstream from the cave opening there is another underground passage, on the right side of the stream which connects the entrance cave. There is another cave towards the downstream running around the cave area, edge-ground pebble tools were collected. On the northern side of the entrance cave at a little higher altitude, there is a rock-shelter facing north-west in front of which is a narrow plateau. Just opposite to this rock shelter across the plateau there are two other rock shelters facing south east. The fallen materials from the roofs as well as walls inside the cave were deposited on the floor of all these caves. As a result, sometimes caves become very narrow and shallow. But no articles could be collected from inside the cave. Typo-technologically, the collected artifacts have a close similarity with those of Thailand, Burma, Malaysia, Vietnam etc. It has pre-Neolithic character and of Haobinhian culture.

Nongpok Keithelmanbi, situated at a distance of 15kms. north east of Yairipok and on the bank of Thoubal river is also one of the rich Prehistoric

site. Four terraces have been found along the Thoubal river and three localities which evidenced the existence of Neolithic and Haobinhian culture.

Neolithic Culture

Here no systematic excavation has been undertaken except Napachik, so far. Hence it is not possible to bring about a real picture of Neolithic culture of this area at this stage.

Napachik is a small hillock in the northern part of Wangoo village, on the right bank of the Imphal river. The site was excavated by the Department of Archaeology, Government of Manipur in 1983. The whole deposit is essentially of hill washed sediments and has seven layers in structure. Each and every layer preserves cultural materials either Hoabinhian or Neolithic or both. The cultural materials discovered form this excavation consist of choppers, scraper, flakes, edged ground knife, grinding stone, ground and polish celts and potsherd, tripod leg wares, plain and corded wares. Microliths are also collected from the excavation.

One can find different types of Neolithic celts collected from various parts of Manipur, which are now preserved in Peoples Museum, Kakching, Manipur State Museum and Department of Archaeology, Government of Manipur. By and large these Neolithic tools are of surface collections. These collections have not only been preserved in the Museums for archaeological study but also in the individual's for magico-religious purposes.

Chalcolithic culture is also flourished at Punjao Pallum Ching with the discovery of three spear heads, one big sword along with different types of Potsherds. The types of potsherds are (i) plain ware, (ii) stamped ware, (iii) incised ware, (iv) cord-marked ware and (iv) carved paddle impressed ware. The tripod leg pottery from Napachik can compare with that found in China Neolithic culture.

Megalithic Monuments

Besides stone tools and potsherds Megalithic remains and Rock Engraving, are nevertheless important phase in Prehistoric archaeology of this area. Till now the eastern Megaliths including that of Manipur have been surveyed only partially and it is confirmed that they are not burials or

tombs but merely memorials to dead. This part of India has a rich megalithic traditions of the past. The Megalithic culture also focuses on the art and technology of the people of north east India.

Some important Megalithic sites are Mao, Maram, Uilong, Maring, areas, Salangthel, Ukhrul, Tharon, Khoupum, Keithelmanbi etc. Avenues of stones are found outside the Maram village and inside the Maram a circle stone is found. At Uilong there is a very remarkable collection of stones, cairns and heaps of stones are found among the Tangkhuls and Quoirengs, who erected them in a conical shape. Some of the beehive cairns are found in Keithelmanbi.

Megalithic remains of Menhir types are found at Tharon Khullen. The monuments exhibit the folk art of the Lengmei Tribes. These monuments are of two types, one representing the activities of four dormitory groups of the village and other commemorating the feast given in connection with funerals.

Another megalithic site is Salangthel, which is located in the hill range overlooking the Loktak Lake about 50Km. south west of Imphal. A group of Megaliths are arranged in north-west and south-east alignment. The Megalithic types of Salangthel are of Menhir except few cairn circle.

According to the genealogy of Rangam the Megalithic monuments at Salangthel were built by the Kom tribes. It is said that "Rangam, who is believed as a Kom Hero could turn many huge stones into pebbles which he used to carry into his pocked and erected them on the hilltops of Arakan, Lushai and Manipur Hills,

Rock engravings are found as a part and partial of Megalithic remains. The worth mentioning sites are Tharon, Khoupum and Salangthel.

Fiyangu is a stream flowing towards the south west of the Tharon caves. This stream bed bears engravings in different motifs and designs. The engravings include figures of different animals, human figurines, hands, and a number of different signs. All the figures are geometrical. A composite of both animals and anthropomorphic figures are also encountered. The figures show the social status and socio-religious beliefs of the people during that time. According to the tradition the villagers believed that the bride

and bridegroom went to the site and engraved floral designs along with the fingers, toes, and palm, feet etc. in commemoration of their marriage, which is an expression of their cherished wishes.

Khoupum with a peak is situated above. 1454.55 m. a.s.l. to the south of the Cachar road and the peak forms the western wall of the Khoupum plateau, and lies on the left bank of the Irang river. The hill ranges bear more then fifty engraved stones. These engravings include foot prints of children, adults, game board, gouge, wine jar, gun sword, counting lines, measuring figures, oblong shield, cross, symbols of female genital organ, variety of flower, spear head, animals etc.

At Salangthel the same symbol of female genital organ is engraved. The indication of these engravings might probably be related to the remembrance of the story of of "Rengam human' (K.B. Singh, 1979). Another indication, of this engraving might be simply the bliss of carving of the youthful mind. It may be concluded that all these are related to the creation and evolution of human beings.

After correlating the archaeological findings with that of the other countries this study could reconstruct the nature and culture of Manipur since prehistoric times. Though Manipur is a hilly region it has got the potential of archaeology. Archaeological materials of the Prehistoric age are not so rich as compared to those of Deccan, Central and North Western India. Prehistoric sites are mostly concentrated in the hilly regions. Songbu is the earliest stone age site discovered so far and may tentatively be kept around 40,000 yrs. B.P. Tools bearing Haobinhian character have been discovered both from the valley and surrounding hills. The technology used by the stone age people of this region has close affinities with that of China and South East Asian countries. Megalithic types found in Manipur are not so large in comparison with those of the Megaliths found in the adjoining states such as in Khasi- Garo hills Rock engravings are conspicuously present in the hilly areas. And the rock engraving of Fiyangu stream at Tharon is the first of its kind in North Eastern India.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CANCHIPUR

By Dr P Gunindro Singh

During the last two centuries, the face of Canchipur kept on changing: from a jungle-clad-hill and marshy land into a royal palace with many fine buildings and temples; then, a deserted ruined capital site; and finally, a University complex, the seat of learning and a hope of this developing state.

Canchipur is a famous historical site of Manipur which figures prominently in the cultural history of the state. It was the capital of Manipur, the sacred place of lord Govinda and the birth place of the famous Manipuri Rasa Dance. The Original name of Canchipur is Langthaban. An interesting legend is woven around the name Langthaban. According to the legend, long ago a maiden of Shelloi Langmai was married to a youth of Thangga Kambong. In those days there was the custom of offering marriage price to the parents of the bride. The Shelloi Langmais, the party of the bride went to Thangga Kambong to collect the marriage price. While they were proceeding towards Thangga Kambong, a shield which was carried on the back of a Shelloi Langmai accidentally slipped on the ground. In the dialect of the Langmais shield was known as *Lang*. The place where the *Lang* was fallen came to be known as Langthaban (Oinam Bhogeshwar Singh, 1967).

Langthaban was rechristened as Canchipur during the time of Bhagyachandra Maharaja who founded the capital of Canchipur in 1779 A.D. It is said that while the capital was under construction at Langthaban, the royal astrologer advised the king to name the new capital with a name beginning with the letter 'K'. Therefore, the new capital at Langthabal was then rechristened as 'Kanchipur'. According to another version the name Kanchipur (Canchipur) was derived from 'Karta' which was one of the popular names of Maharaja Bhagyachandra (Snahal Guneshwar, 1980).

Canchipur as the Capital of Manipur

Canchipur was the capital of Manipur during the time of Bhagyachandra Maharaja from 1779 to 1796 A.D. It was also the capital of Manipur during the time of Maharaja Gambhir Singh from 1826 to 1834 A.D. After the death of Gambhir Singh, his son Chandrakirti, only two years old, was crowned as the king of Manipur while Nara Singh was the regent. In 1844 A.D. for four months Canchipur was the capital of Nara Singh Maharaja. Nara Singh Maharaja shifted his capital to Kangla, the ancestral royal seat of the Meitei Kings. Since then Canchipur capital has been abandoned.

The history of Manipur from the eighteenth century to the first half of the nineteenth century was mainly a story of struggle with Burma. In the first half of the eighteenth century king Garibaniwaj (1709-48 A.D.) invaded Burma several times. He and his expert horsemen were the terror of upper Burma. On more than one occasion the Manipuris defeated the Burmese who were sent to hold the frontier of Burma. In 1738 A.D. Garibaniwaj and his armies camped near **Tsit-Kaing,** stormed the stockade built to defend the famous **Kaung-Mu-Daw Pagoda** erected by Tha-lun, massacred its garrison and burnt every house and monastery up to walls of Ava (Hall, D.G.E., 1966).

After Garibaniwaj, there were political unrest in Manipur due to disunity among his successors. The Burmese who were looking for such a chance did not fail to exploit the situation. They invaded Manipur several times with the determination of extirpating a race whom they found impossible to subdue permanently. In 1756 A.D. Alaungpaya sent a massive force to defeat Manipur. However, the invaders were repulsed. In 1758 A.D. Alaungpaya led an expedition. He advanced upto the valley **Kyengdweng** and crossed the **Ungoching** hills by the Khampat route, entered Manipur valley by the imole pass and fought a sanguinary battle with the inhabitants under Bharat Shai, he occupied the capital where he remained for thirteen days. In 1765 A.D. **Tsheng-hypoo-sheng** attacked Manipur and took possession of the capital, remaining there a month and retiring with his army laden with booty. In 1774 A.D. **Tsheng-hypoo-sheng** again invaded Manipur, sending a large force under three generals. The Burmese troops were met by those of Raja Jay Singh (Bhagyachandra) at a short distance from the capital; a bloody conflict which lasted for three days ensued and terminated in the total defeat of the Manipuris and Jay Singh fled to Assam

(Gazetteer of Burma). Bhagyachandra Maharaja sought the help of the Assamese king to drive out the Burmese occupational forces.

The unstable political situation and the frequent wars with neighboring kingdom of Burma (Myanmar) led Maharaja Bhagyachandra to shift his capital from one place to another. At first, he shifted his capital to Sangaithel, later known as Jaynagar, the to Visnupur (Bisnupur), then to Canchipur and finally to Konthoujam Yumpham.

Canchipur during the time of Maharaja Bhagyachandra

According to Cheitharol Kumbaba, the Royal Chronicle of Manipur, in the **Cheithaba** year of Maibam Chakrapani 1701 *Saka* (1779 A.D.), on the third day of *Kalen* month, on Tuesday, king Jay Singh shifted his capital from Visnupur of Canchipur. In the same year, the temple of Shree Shree Govindajee was built at Canchipur. The idol of Lord Govinda carved out of the jack fruit tree from Kaina which is presently worshipped in the palace was installed in the Shree Shree Govindajee temple of Canchipur. The *abhishek ceremony* of Govindajee was held on the eleventh day of *Hiyangei (Kartik)* month, on Friday, 1779, A.D. On the occasion of the ceremony, the famous Manipuri *Rasa-Leela* was performed for the first time in the *Rasa Mandal* of Canchipur. Maharajakumari Vimbavati, daughter of Rajarshi Bhagyachandra took the part of *Thourani* (one who acts the part of Radha in Rasa Leela). The *Rasa Leela* was performed for five consecutive nights from the 11th *Hiyangei* to the 15th *Hiyangei* (full moon of *Kartik)*. That was the first Manipuri *Rasa Leela* performance which has been the pride of the state and the nation.

During the time of Maharaja Bhagyachandra Canchipur became a site blended with natural and artificial beauty.

Canchipur during the time of Maharaja Gambhir Singh

Gambhir Singh liberated Manipur in 1825 A.D. by driving away the Burmese occupational forces. By the treaty of Yandabo signed on 24th February, 1826, the king of Ava agreed, among other things, to abstain from all interference in the affairs of Manipur (Bhattacharjee, 1977). Gambhir Singh selected Canchipur as the capital of Manipur. In 1827 A.D. He shifted his capital to Canchipur. Gambhir Singh built many buildings and temples.

Maharaja Gambhir Singh died in 1834 leaving behind an infant son, two years old. The young prince, Ningthem Pishak (childking) was crowned as the king of Manipur and Nara Singh the most favourite of Gambhir Singh Maharaja, was the regent and looked after the kingdom. When Chandrakirti Maharaja was about 2 years old, in 1844 on Sunday, the 27th day of January, while regent Nara Singh prostrating before the image of lord Vrindaban Chandra, one Nabin Singh made an attempt to assassinate the regent. The culprit was overpowered and executed. On hearing the news of the incident, the queen mother fled to Cachar with her son Chandrakirti (L. Ibungohal Singh and N. Khelchandra Singh, 1967). According to *Cheitharol Kumbaba*, due to the mounting pressure of the general public, Nara Singh ascended the throne on Thursday, the 19th day of Phairen month, 1844. After four months, on the 19th day of *Kalen,* 1844 Nara Singh Maharaja shifted his capital from Canchipur to Kangla, the ancient royal seat of the Meitei kings. Since then Canchipur capital was abandoned.

Today, Canchipur has become a University town, seat of learning and hope of this developing state.

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Map of Canchipur Capital



Courtesy : Manipur State Museum, Imphal

A BRIEF REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

By M Jitendra Singh

The Department of History, Manipur University, with a committed academic programme to train the students of ancient Indian History in the filed archaeology and to enable those scholars working on ancient history of the peoples of Manipur to reconstruct the history of the indigenous cultures that existed in the dim past, has been doing excavations for the last eleven years under the supervision of Dr. L. Kunjeswori Devi, a Senior Assistant Professor and trained archaeologist, assisted by Dr. M. Jitendra Singh, a Professor in Ancient Indian History. Of all the sites so far excavated, Khangabok Excavation in March, 1996, and Khamaran Excavation in June, 1997, generated great excitement all over Manipur. The discovery brought about changes in the thinking of the local scholars. A lot of information about the mode of disposal of the dead and antiques of the peoples were collected.

Khangabok Excavation

Khangabok is a village, which is about 27 kms south of the capital, Imphal. The site, which was earlier on the western fringe of the village, is now in the campus of the Khangabok Meisnam Leikai Boys, School with the horizontal expansion of village area. The earliest form of the site was, according to the versions of the local elders, a mound locally called Murali Lampak, a field of the dead. Before the digging up earth to find remains of the past buried under it by the Department of History in collaboration with the Department of Archaeology, Govt. of Manipur, the mound had already been levelled off completely on the expansion of the school compound. It is said that while levelling the mound by the school authority with the help of the local volunteers, the remains, such as beads, bronze rings and plates, bones, potsherds, etc. had been accidentally unearthed. This certainly disturbed the upper layer of the area. Now the soil is found compact and hard.

The excavation was done digging five trenches measuring 4x4 sq.m. each in the shape of mathematical symbol'+' (plus). All the trenches were excavated upto the virgin soil except the eastern and western trenches for the local club and the village authority excited by the discovery wanted to preserve the site as a living museum. In the digging three burial layers were found within the depth of 77 cms. The burial pots and the other mortuary sundries were carefully exposed in the layers and the same were plotted on the graph paper using three dimensional method. Photographs of the remains in the trenches were taken.

The Khangabok excavation discovered the following remains :

(1) Pots containing skulls, bones and some other materials presumed to be offerings.

(2) One skull and bones without pot.

(3) Some smaller pots around and larger pots.

(4) Pots decorated without chord mark designs.

(5) Ring footed bowls used as lids and bowls without foot.

(6) Iron objects like knives and daos, thin plates, rings and ear rings made of bronze and beads.

(7) Hookahs made of stone and terracotta.

(8) Two astray square bell metal coins of Maharaja Garib Niwaz (1709-48) at the depth of 27 cm. and 50 cm.

(9) One astry earthen tripod leg at the depth of 50 cm.

(10) Black and smooth potsherds of vase type.

The skulls and the bones in the pots and the other mortuary articles indicate that the place was at one time used as a burial ground and the mode of disposal of the dead is of secondary burial type. This burial ground might have been of the period before Maharaja Garib Niwaz (1709-48), who exhumed the bones of his ancestors and cremated them, and from that time ordered his subjects to burn their dead. It is well known that up to the advent of the introduction Hindusim, the dead, had been buried, and the Royal Chronicle, *Cheitharol Kumbaba,* mentions the enactment by Khagemba (1597-1652) of a

rule that the dead were to be buried outside the enclosures of the houses. However, it can be confirmed only when the results of C_{14} dating of the sample sent to the Birla Institute of Paleobotany, Lucknow, is received.

Khamaran Excavation

Khamaran, which is about 12 kms. north-west of Imphal, is a small village where Maharaja Garib Niwaz (1709-48), who successfully invaded Burma eleven times, made the Burmese war captives settle.

The site is in the slope of a small hill locally called Luwang Ching after the name of Luwang Ningthou Punshiba who is also described as one of the ancestors of the Luwang Clan (Salai). Only two trenches measuring 4x4 sq.m. each in the eastern slope of the hill facing the village were laid out. The upper layer is of humus black soil.

In the digging clusters of pots were found at the depth of 0.48 m. and again at the depth of 0.70 m. In this phase all the bigger pots were found to have contained armlets and rings made of bronze, beads and charred bones, and one pot associated with an iron axe. The larger pots, which contained charred bone and artifacts, are decorated with incised marks. Pots of different shapes and varieties were also found. These include spouted jug with sun rays mark, flower vases, a jug with elongated neck, lids, hookahs with incised decorations and small dishes. One of the most interesting findings of the excavation was the well decorated China clay bowl. Quartz and agate beads were also discovered from a burial pot.

All the pots are hand made with coarse texture and red in colour. Some pots are of grey colour.

The remains have shown that the site was at one time a common burial place, and the same type of wares had already been found at Sekta and Khangabok. This suggests that the slope of the hill might have been used as a common burial place before the 18th century by the Khamaran people whose main occupation, according to the Meitei (Manipuri) chronicles, was pot making. A pot factory site of the people was also found at Khamaran Mayai Leikai,

All the findings of the excavations reported hereinabove are kept and preserved under the custody of this department.

TRADITION AND MODERNISATION IN MANIPUR VALLEY: CONFUSION AND CONFLICT IN IDENTITY CRISIS

By S N Pandey

The people of Manipur are composed of two ethnic groups, the Meiteis living in the valley and Naga and Kuki-Chins living on the surrounding hills. The people are pre-dominantly Mongoloid stock, who speak Tibeto-Burman language. Because of difficult topography and lack of communication and transport, the tribal society could not develop beyond chieftainship. The majority population living in the valley, the Meiteis had long history of settled agriculture. The Meiteis had an organised life and by 15th century the society in Manipur Valley developed into a feudal state. Tradition and social life of Meiteis was a kinship and lineage based society which emerges as principalities. The society in the beginning was divided into seven clans. These seven clans has its independent principality in different regions. The Meitei dynasty established supremacy over them and absorbed them all.

It has been rightly observed that unlike the state less pre-literate Nagas and Mizos of pre-British times Meiteis of Manipur crystallized feudal state and literature of their own since many centuries. They had their indigenous religion, faith, metaphysic, rituals and method of worship through centuries of settled life. During 18th century there was mass conversion to Vaishnava sect of Hindu religion through efforts and force of powerful king, Garibniwaj. After this conversion there were successive rulers, who tried to consolidate Hindu religion throughout 19th and 20th centuries. It resulted into deeper roots of Indian tradition penetrating into society. But inspite of Hindu influence some of strong traditional values continued in the society.

Before conversion to Hinduism the society in Manipur was more or less egalitarian. There was no stratified caste system in the villages and absence of occupational caste helped the people to develop a community life based on

co-operative labour. Garibniwaj accepted Hiduism in 1717 A.D. and forced his people to accept the new religion. In his attempt to convert the whole population he resorted to repression and atrocity. On the advice of Shantidas, a Vaishnavite preacher, he took action to collect and burn large number of scriptures. His ruthless oppression of traditional faith must have left scar in the heart of followers of indigenous religion. After Garibniwaj, his grandson Jai Singh further consolidated Vaishnavite cult of Hinduism. He attempted to transform Manipur society and arranged translation of all Hindu scriptures in Manipuri language in Bengali script. The Hindu religion was further consolidated during the powerful reign of Chandrakriti Singh (1850-1888).

Inspite of all these efforts by the successive rulers of Manipur, many of social facades of Hinduism like caste system, sati-practice, rigid pollution taboos on food and drink, 'Parda', restriction on widow-remarriage could not prevail. They continued to worship their traditional deities like Pakhangba and Sanamahi alongwith Hindu gods and goddess. Of course, as impact of religion, gradually social stratification grew in society.

Manipur was a land of peasant communities characterised by rural residence, familiar agriculture of self owned landholdings with simple rural occupation providing subsistence livelihood. The family was the centrally important social kinship ties and strong lineage and clan tradition inherent in it. In the society peasant come to occupy very low status, particularly with the growth of landed aristocracy. The aristocracy had grown very fast with their association with Kings.

After establishment of Hindu religious ethos, this class had assumed character of Indian court elite during 18th and 19th centuries. The orthodox social order led the social stratification very strong. The occupation of Manipur by the British in 1891 exposed Manipur society to a powerful external force, British imperialism. The colonising process set in motion drastic changes in name of modernisation. The native aristocracy was weakened. Alongwith political changes new education was introduced with studies of English and Bengali. A new social class emerged, educated middle class, a product of new education and inheritance of landed property and wealth. They become the major social force, however the British authorities allowed the native state to fashion itself as a princely state. The British decided not to interfere in the socio-religious spheres. It helped the orthodox

Hinduism to carry its control over the common people. The king Churachand Singh turned a despotic ruler. With his help Brahmins increased their influence and formed a device to control and exploit common people.

Churachand Singh with the help of Brahma Sabha, a council of Brahmins, began oppression of the people. As a result, during the first decades of the 20th century, the common people of Manipur Valley experienced form of socio-religious oppression. The King resorted to increase his grip over the people for his personal gains. He assumed super socio-religious role to enhance his income. He started collecting various socio-religious taxes and used them as a source of income. He entered in union with orthodox reactionary group of Brahmins for this purpose. They introduced a system of Mangba and Sengba (Purity and Pollution). According to this system any person could be declared as 'Mangba' or polluted. The family of such persons would not only be socially boycotted, but would not be allowed to perform any of the Hindu religious rites and ceremonies. The exploitation of people had reached to such extent that during early decades of the 20th century half of the people had suffered ostracism in one form or other.

By thirty of the twentieth century first generation of educated Manipuris surfaced in the society. The educated class started reacting against socio-religious oppressive policy of King and Brahmins. In 1934 an organisation with the name Nikhil Hindu Manipur Mahasabha was established. In the beginning, the King patronised it, in fact he become the first President of this organisation. The king got interested in it because he wanted to incorporate the educated middle class in his fold but in 1938 the Mahasabha resolved to drop word 'Hindu' and took a secular form with new name 'Nikhil Manipur Mahasabha under the leadership of Irabot Singh. The Mahasabha mobilized people to defy the diktat of Brahma Sabha. It began movement for the reform of society. But at the same time educated middle class wanted preservation of Hinduism, the ethos which they had imbibed through last two centuries. It was the believed of this group that the problems of society could be resolved by rectifying ills of Hinduism.

But at the same time a new phenomenon was slowly emerging in Meitei society. An earnest search for original religion and culture of the Meitei society began. In the beginning it was very weak in comparison to the

movement led by Nikhil Manipuri Mahasabha. First the urge to know their original religion and culture was felt by few individuals. Inspite of conversion to Hinduism, Meitei common people had continued their faith in traditional gods and goddess. The Sanamahi worship has remained in every house-fold from generation to generation till the present century.

The Meiteis had received impact of Indian culture and tradition in 18th century and there was mass conversion of the people to Vaishnavite sect of Hindu religion. Through two centuries of impact of Hindu religion, the Indian tradition has naturally taken deep roots. The Vaishnavism was very liberal and all Vaishnava cults condemned the rigid rituals of Brahminism. But during the reign of Churachand Singh orthodox group of Brahmins increased their hold. The Hindu religion in Manipur degenerated into ruthless oppression of the people.

The phase of oppression through Brahma Sabha with active support of king had caused immense miseries to the common people. Most of the poor people who were declared untouchable were economically so weak, were not able to pay the money for readmission in Hindu religion. The indigenous religion had no such financial compulsion to follow. In day-to-day life people were continuing practice of traditional rituals.

At this very time some section of educated Meitei started questioning justification of following Hindu religion. The myth of the Aryan origin of the Meiteis, created by the Brahmin was no more attractive to the common man. People started thinking that it was created by the Brahmin scholars after the conversion to Hinduism. The confusion between race, language, culture led the people to think that the conversion to Hinduism had made them Aryan.

During the first half of the 20th century, educated middle class received impact of modern current. Before it, Vaishnavism from Bengal had already spread in Manipur. It has also brought influence of Bengali language and Manipuri language adopted Bengali script. Under the British rule a lot of Bengali speaking educated Indians came to Manipur as teachers, clerks and Junior officials. The native aristocratic and upper middle class was greatly influenced by Indian culture, particularly Bengali culture. They started imitating Bengali manners in life style, most of the position in services were

occupied by the educated Bengalis coming from outside. The native aristocratic class associated with the native ruler were pre-dominantly in the court and assumed character of elite of Indian culture. They tried to control the common people through various methods. The king and Brahmins indulged in various kind of oppressions.

The educated middle class rose against the oppression, but they were keen to preserve the ethos of Hindu religion. On the otherhand a section of educated Meiteis started pondering over their roots. The dominance of Indians from outside particularly from Bengal appeared to them a great hindrance to their life and progress. N. Phullo was the first person, who took up the task of searching roots of Meiteis. He began to think about the identity of Meitei and decided to search Manipuri script and identify the indigenous religion. In 1930 he founded 'Apokpa Marup' in Cachar with objective to investigate the ancient religion and culture of Meiteis. He worked with full dedication for a decade for popularising indigenous religion. He died on 30th June, 1941 but before his death he had developed contact with good number of Meiteis of Manipur. Takhelambam Bokul alongwith his few supporters met Phullo and decided to organise revivalist movement in Manipur. They decided to revive Sanamahi cult, the objective was to raise the status of Sanamahi from secondary position to the original position of premier deity of Meiteis. After concerted efforts, 'Meitei Marup' was established in 1945 in Manipur. It decided to revive the cultural heritage of the Meitei people and carry research in the history and literature to revive Manipuri script. They also decided to worship indigenous gods and recite and chant religious hymns in the mother tongue. The emphasis of movement was to use Manipuri language in worship and find out Manipuri script.

> The revivalists explained that their intention was to revive original names of gods and goddess, which were substituted with the name to Hindu gods and goddess after conversion to Hinduism. They also asked to discard the Hindu Gotra which were introduced in the name of different clans.

The Brahma Sabha, the council of Brahmins reacted sharply to the works of Meitei Marup and all those who were taking part in the revivalist movements were persecuted. All the leaders and supporters of revivalist

movement were declared untouchables. The Brahma Sabha declared 38 leaders of revivalist movement on October 1945 but by the beginning of 1948 it had spread in all parts of the valley and large number of common people had started following guidance of Sanamahi cult.

The people were convinced that the revivalist movement was for the purpose of saving indigenous religion and culture of Meiteis.

The wave of revivalist movement which began in Cachar in thirties had reached in Manipur as early as in 1937. It was formally established in 1945. The revivalists impressed people to follow their original religion and campaigned to consider Sanamahi their supreme God. They asked people to worship Sanamahi and other indigenous gods in original Meitei system. They also campaigned to revive all indigenous gods and goddess. They were particular to use Manipuri language in worship.

The Brahmins and some Manipuri Hindus stood in organised way against the revivalist movement. As a result followers of Sanamahi cult refused to accept worship of Sanamahi by Brahmins. They opposed arrangement made by the Kings after conversion to Hinduism to handle religious places by Brahmins. The movement was gradually politicalised and some radical group asserted that the Meitei identity could be preserved and fostered only by a Meitei Sovereign state. The inclination of separateness of Manipur from India was emphasised by some section and they started seeking a new political system alternative to Indian democratic system. The fear of being swallowed up by the great Indian multitude due to immigrants from outside created anti-Indian feeling. It was also asserted by this group that the people of Manipur would loose, their cultural identity.

The revivalist movement started taking more radical stand by seventies of the present century. An organised movement to take over statues of indigenous gods from the hands of Brahmins was launched. The exponents of this movement succeeded in taking over all the idols of indigenous from the hands of Brahmins and restored them to their proper places. All the Hindu religious festivals which had replaced indigenous festivals were stopped. By 1977 the state government accepted and legitimized all such actions.

The revivalist movement which had emerged as a cultural renaissance at early stage assumed a political colour. All the militant organisations found it very congenial for their campaign. The search of Meitei identity had greatly attracted large number of people as orthodox Hindu section had alienated the masses from Hindu religion. They found great solace to turn to the indigenous religion. The search of identity in Manipur led to the glorification of their ancient political system and separation of Manipur from India.

Manipur had started receiving impact of Indian tradition and culture in 18th century. Since then Indian culture had developed and it established deep roots in society. By the 1940's the search of Meitei identity was dominated by peasant nationalism which attempted to integrate with Indian National Movement. But soon after the end of colonial rule, a different orientation of identity search developed. The disappointment and frustration of youths led to reaction to integration process. It led to emphasis on de-Indianisation. There emerged a trend to discard all myths and symbol that had bridged the people of Manipur with Indian tradition.

The process of Indianisation of Meiteis had a long history of more than two hundred years. Many kings had played crucial role in this. The kings had made it compulsory for every family to have a Brahmin as Guru. There had been conscious dispersal of Brahmin families amidst the Meitei's families in villages. Alongwith Brahmin settlement through out Meitei population, all the paraphernalia of construction of temple and building of 'Mandap' were carried. The 'Mandaps' became venue of scripture reading or Ras-Lilas or story telling etc. They also served purpose of community dining hall. All the Hindu rituals were observed strictly under the guidance of Brahmins, Sankritan singing or presentation of Lila had become compulsory rites. All these activities became symbol of prestige in society. It led to the tremendous refinement of artistic performance. The process of codification of dance movement and music structure, stylizatioin of words and gesture and adherence to Indian shastric principle continued for centuries.

Some British writers in the background of continued influence of traditional custom has expressed their reservation on the real impact of Hindu culture. Saroj Nalini Parratt has rejected their views and has asserted,

.... 'because of historical process of interactions of the two forms of religion Hinduism and animism, there emerged a synthetic type of religion unique in itself.

The interaction with Hinduism was very strong and so even after acceptance of the Sanamahi Cult, the rituals related with day to day life like birth, marriage, etc, continue to be celebrated on the pattern which has emerged with contact of Hindu religion. The achievement gained with synthesis of India cultures, particularly development of dances is still considered a great hall mark of Manipuri culture. The impact of two cultures is striking visible in society in state of confusion and conflict. It was not easy to stop the traditional worship of indigenous gods after conversion to Hinduism during 18th century. Likewise, the movement for re-establishing supremacy of 'Sanamahi cult' could not erase all the imprints of Indian cultures. The movement for reviving indigenous religion i.e.. the Sanamahi cult had given strong emphasis on national identity of the Meiteis. It gained support from peasants, youths and students and in due course turned into a political movement.

The various groups of insurgents have declared their objective to establish a sovereign Manipur. Their objective is also to revive indigenous religion and so they find revivalist movement favourable to their own objective. The Meitei National Front not only supported but guided the radical group of revivalists in seizing control of different religious centres and idols from the control of Hindu Brahmins. On many occasions their occurred attacks to destroy Hindu idols and demolish Hindu temples during seventies. But in 1980's popular participation in revivalists movement has declined, people were not very enthusiastic to join in radical actions of Sanamahi cult. Though Sanamahi cult has established supremacy in religions life of Meitei population, the political movement against Indian cultural supremacy has gone under control of militant organisations. Thus confusion and conflict is continuing in identity crisis of Manipur.

MANIPUR-LUSHAI HILLS RELATIONS DURING THE 19TH CENTURY

By Lal Dena

Situated between Assam and Burma where the process of colonial expansion had already started, Manipur had played a very prominent part in the politics of North East Frontier. The commanding strategic position she occupied had clearly demonstrated its advantages as a military base which had long been recognised by the colonial authorities. As a matter of fact, the British imperialists wanted to use Manipur as a buffer zone both against the Burmese and the frontier tribes. Manipur, being an independent country, had a fairly more advanced civilization and stable political system and the colonial officials, right from the beginning of their contact with her, looked upon Manipur as their ally who would assist them in their control over the North East Frontier.

After the conclusion of the treaty of Yandaboo in 1826 and the annexation of Assam in the same year, the colonial authorities at Fort William began to formulate many propositions for the defence of their frontier, particularly against the hill tribes. The so-called frontier policy may be broadly classified under three heads. The first of these may be called the policy of pure defence. Under this, the colonial authorities were to have as few relations as possible with the tribes. According to Lord Dalhousie, the colonial officials were to confine themselves to the establishment of effective means of defence on the line of their own frontier. A second line of policy was the permanent occupation of all the frontier regions which would involve simultaneous subjugation of all their inhabitants. A third course was to refrain from occupying the regions or from exercising any direct control over the people, and to attempt to gain an effectual influence over them by conciliatory measures by doing all in their power to extend trade and other humanising influence, while making the tribal chiefs and their followers

clearly understand that the colonial authorities had both the power and the determination to inflict severe punishment for any misbehaviour on the part of the frontier people. This is the broad framework of the frontier policy and the Manipur-Lushai Hills relations during the 19th century is to be studied from this perspective.

Right from the historical period, Manipur had turbulent relations with her neighbouring countries. Raids and counter–raids were inflicted upon one another. Not a few of the raids of Lushais and other hillmen on Manipur and even on British territory were instigated by members of the Manipur ruling family. Perhaps most frequent raids during the period under study were committed by Vanhnuoilal, Pawibawi, Vanpuilal and Suakpuilal; the first two were known as the Eastern chiefs and the latter two as the Western chiefs of the Lushais.

The boundary line between Manipur and Lushai Hills is formed by the Barak river running from Tipaimukh up to Jiribam. By the treaty of 1833, the colonial officials agreed to give to the Manipur Maharaja the line of Jiri river and the western bend of the Barak river and the most dominant population of this region are the Hmars who belonged to Mizo-Kuki group during the historical period of the frontier tribes; the Thadou-speaking Kukis were perhaps the most ferocious and war-like people. Therefore, at the suggestion of General Lister, the Kuki levy was raised in 1850 partly as a force to be used against the Lushais and partly to give employment to the youth of the Kuki tribes whose love for fighting would then be legitimately gratified in defending the frontier instead of murdering their neighbours, as had been their custom from time immemorial. Major Stewart commanded the levy for some years which was later amalgamated with the police in 1869.

In March 1869, the Manipur Raja deputed 110 Kukis into the Lushai Hills obviously to harass them. They surprised a party of Lushais asleep, killed 40 of them and carried off a lot of arms, 17 muskets, many of them with the tower-mark. At this, both the Eastern and Western chiefs of Lushais sent 3 Lushais to feel the way to a reconciliation with Manipur, promising to restore all the prisoners and 30 guns which they collected during the raids on Manipur in February, 1869. Dr. Brown, the then Political Agent,

however, advised the Raja "to make no promises whatever, but to say to the messengers that on the delivery of the captives, guns, etc., the Manipur government would then hear what they had to say, regarding the peace for the future. The messengers had also been informed in addition that they should return everything in their hands and were genuinely desirous of making peace, their chiefs and headmen must come, as it was with them that any negotiation would be carried on". The Viceroy and Governor-in-council was inclined to approve of the establishment of a permanent peace between the state of Manipur and the Lushai tribe. At the same time, the council reiterated that the Lushais and, for that matter, any other frontier tribes had to give guarantees that no further raids would be committed either in British or in Manipur territory. While their negotiation was going on, some Lushais committed another raid on the village near Moirang in December 1869 to take vengeance for raid of the Manipur Kukis on Lushais in March, 1869.

The government of Manipur again sent a deputation consisting of 3 Manipuris, 3 Koms and 2 Lushais under the leadership of Amu Subedar to find out who committed the last raid. While pleading their non-involvement, Pawibawi and Vanhnuailal cast the blame of the last raid on the Pawis. As regards to the earlier raids, the two chiefs told the Manipuri messengers that they had offered presents to the Raja and desired peace but at the same time, they insisted that they would not give up any prisoners or guns taken from the Manipuris. In anger, they asked: 'Why should the Manipur Raja want more ? If you do not agree to this, we will take possession of the Cachar road, and not allow any one to pass between it and Manipur. We will utterly destroy the Khongjai tribe of Kukis; we will invade the Manipur valley, make coolies of the Manipuris, and eat all their ponies and cattle'. To this Amu retorted thus: 'The Lushais had commenced disturbances and had committed the fault; but if they desired to renew hostilities, they might do so, as we were not afraid of them...". Norindrajit, a former Manipuri raider and pretender who was transported by the British in 1857 or 1858 had arrived among the Lushais and stayed then in Vanhnuailal's village and the Lushai chiefs said, "he (Norinrajit) will accompany us when we attack Manipur". Summing up the whole situation. Dr. Brown, in his letter to C.U. Aitchson, officiating secretary to the Government of India, reported thus. "Every

security that is likely to prevent a repetition of the late disturbance should be taken from this tribe and every effort should be made to obtain further the submission of other tribes, who should also be required to give guarantees that no further raids will be committed either in British or in Manipur territory. I am inclined to think that the threat of invasion is not likely to be carried out, but precautions will be taken to meet such a contingency. The chief Vanhnuailal's having given in his adhesion to the views of the other chiefs looks ominous, as hitherto he has remained neutral, if not friendly". In the meantime, on receiving J.W. Edgar's (Deputy Commissioner of Cachar) proposal regarding the future relations between Manipur and Lushai Hills, the Lt. Governor of Bengal laid down that the Political Agent at Manipur had to see that no aggression on his part could be permitted, and that he must also take effective steps to make his subject Kukis understand this, and to punish rigorously any disobedience of these instructions. This was precisely the policy to be followed by Manipur in regard to the Lushais in future and it was finally endorsed by the Government of India in a letter to the Political Agent of Manipur on 30 June 1870.

In order to further improve the relations between Manipur and Lushai Hills, Dr. Brown was of the view that a personal visit to the Lushai country and an interview with the chiefs and inhabitants would be productive of much good. For this purpose, he wanted to make use of one Lushai chief, Damvung, who, with his followers, had settled in the Manipur Hills to the south of the valley. Though the Government of Bengal approved of the proposal initially, it later on suggested that the Political Agent should only be allowed to enter that portion of the Lushai country which bordered on Manipur, if expressly invited by the chiefs to do so. The stand of the government was thus to discourage the Political Agent's visit to Lushai Hills as far as possible. Instead the Lushai chiefs be rather encouraged to come into Manipur to discuss any pending issues.

In 1877, again the subjects of Pawibawi, Lalbura and Lengkam committed repeated raids on the Kabui Nagas living in the villages adjacent to the main road from Cachar to Manipur. For fear of retaliation, Pawibawi and Lengkam expressed their willingness to establish friendly relations with the Kabui Nagas and the Maharaja of Manipur even proposed to send a deputation to Tipaimukh for the purpose. J.W. Edgar, however, pointed

out that Lalbura could not be ignored in such peace negotiation and if need be, a joint meeting of all the chiefs should be convened to consider the question of future relations. Instead of blaming the Lushai chiefs, the Chief Commissioner of Assam said that the Maharaja failed to protect his country by force of arms and no negotiation with the Lushais under the existing circumstance would have any lasting effect.

Despite a constant watch over the Kukis in British territory and Manipur, the frontier officers sometimes found it difficult to get correct information about the actual dealings the Kukis and other border tribes might have with the Lushais. Not surprisingly, the Hmars in Tipaimukh and around were involved in two wars with the Lushais–the first in 1880 and the second between 1882 and 1887. During the second war, the Hmars were given better weapons by the men of the Manipur Maharaja. One of the fiercest encounters took place at Sabungkawt between Thanlon and Suongsang within Manipur. With the intervention of the British forces in 1887, the war came to an end, leaving heavy casualties on both sides.

From what has been indicated above, the realities of the frontier troubles and inter-tribal wars have clearly shown that the policy of pure defence or conciliatory measures had been a dismal failure. Thus from 1890-1891, the whole Lushai country was taken over as one of the hill districts under the province of Assam. On the side of Manipur, as a result of the Anglo-Manipur war of 1891, the process of the consolidation of British colonial administration had began with the stationing of petty officials in different parts of the hill territory of Manipur. Whether one likes it or not, the expansion of the colonial power in both the two countries had greatly contributed to the stabilisation of the relations of the two neighbouring countries. As a matter of fact, the political officers could either be transferred from Manipur to Lushai Hills or vice versa.

CONSTRAINTS IN THE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EAST INDIA

By Ksh Bimola Devi

The North Eastern India comprising Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura occupies a very strategic geographical position in India. However, the states are very backward economically, politically and socially. To study the backwardness of this region, one has to set a time limit, i.e. before or after Independence. Before Indian Independence, most of the states of North East India except Assam, Manipur and Tripura were kept under separate administration, directly under the Governor of Assam. The administrative system of Assam was also quite different from the administration of Manipur and Tripura (the two being princely states). This position is to be noted in the present analysis. However, while focussing our study on the 'Constraints in the political development of North East India' we have to concentrate our attention on the Post-Independence period. The tittle of the topic suggests that there are constraints. So the object of this paper is to examine the factors which act as constraints in the political development of North East India and how far they are responsible for it.

1. Historical Reasons

History was mainly responsible for the political backwardness and for the slow political development of North East India. Before the coming of the British, the areas occupied by the tribes had no organised political system. The traditional political system was only among the particular tribe. And the political system of a tribe also differs from another tribe. As for example the political system of the Khasis was quite different from that of the Garos, Mizos, Nagas etc. The British annexed the areas occupied by the tribes only in the latter part of the 19th century. The British did not interfere in the internal administration of the tribals. The traditional political system of the tribes was allowed to continue. The policy of non-interference and non-

introduction of a uniform system of administration in the hill areas by the British was partly responsible for the lack of democratic political consciousness in these areas before Independence. Because during the period, the provinces like Assam had already enjoyed the democratic practices as introduced by the British Government from time to time. The princely states like Manipur and Tripura also had the political experience of being under two heads, i.e. (1) The British Government and (2) the king. There was a strong discussion among the British officials whether the hill areas should be included or not in the constitutional reforms in India. The views of the non-officials were also taken into consideration. Most expressed the view that the hill areas, except the Khasis and Jaintia hills, should be excluded from the reforms. Accordingly on the eve of Independence the tribal areas in North East India were divided into excluded areas and partially excluded areas. The Indian Independence Act, 1947 provided that all provinces and all parts of the province should be governed as nearly as might be in accordance with the Government of India Act, 1935. So from August 15, 1947, the administration of the Excluded and Partially excluded areas were entrusted to the Government of Assam.

2. Ethno-Sociological Factor

The existence of a large number of ethnic groups in North East India is also mainly responsible for the slow growth of organised political consciousness and political development in the region. Nowhere in India nowhere in the world is the composition of the population so diverse as in this region.

Broadly they may be divided into three groups (a) Hills tribes, (b) Plain tribes and the people of the plains. Each group is heterogeneous. For example, in the plains of Manipur, there are Meiteis, Muslims (Manipuri), tribals, and other Indians like Bangalis, Biharis, Assamese etc. The same can be said of Assam and Tripura. Among the tribes also there are immense diversities. The number of tribes in the region are ;

Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram	–	23
Manipur	–	29
Tripura	–	19
Arunachal Pradesh	–	24
Nagaland	–	14

These major tribes can be divided into may sub-tribes. The Political consciousness and the political culture of a tribe is quite different from another tribe. The exchange of political ideas among these various groups or tribes are only to the minimum level. There is not enough interaction of political ideas and views among the people of North East India. Political Communication in this region is very poor. Hence one reason for backwardness.

3. Language

Language is an important means of communicating ideas from one individual to another individual. It greatly helps in the development of ideas and consciousness especially when the community speaks one language. But the people of North East India by having diverse languages cannot exchange ideas among themselves. Each state have many languages as shown below :

Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram	–	192
Arunachal Pradesh	–	168
Manipur	–	87
Tripura	–	112
Nagaland	–	95

Conflicts and tensions between two communities speaking two different languages created political crisis in the region. For example, the Language conflict between Bangalise and Assamese in 1960 was mainly responsible for political movements by other communities.

4. Religion

Religion is also another factor working as a constraint in the political development of North East India. Apart from having diversity of religion among the people of North East India, the main problem for the right development of Political ideas is that each religious group is concentrated in a particular area. For example, at present tribal society of Manipur is mostly on the pattern of Christian Society. For example, the Christians are mainly in the hills. In the plains, the Hindus rarely mixed up with the Muslims regarding the exchange of political ideas as they settle in different areas. So when one

community having one religion is separated form another community having different religion, the result is slow political development. Then again there are also tribes who usually appointed non-Christians as chiefs. 'All the headmen (Nokmas) in Garo Hills are non-Christians'. The result is that the laws in these villages are mainly based on customs and usages. This slows down the progress of political development in the region. There are no doubt places or situation in which different individuals having different religions got mixed up, but rarely one found free communication of political ideas.

5. Geographical Position

One may also examine the geographical position of North East India while studying the problem of political development in the region. It is surrounded on three sides by foreign countries e.g. in the north by Tibet, on the east and south by Burma and Bangladesh. Any political happenings in these foreign countries greatly influenced the people of North East India. And developed countries like U.S.A. and formerly U.S.S.R. (now Russia) take keen interest in the region in the sphere of International Politics. Neighbouring countries like China, Pakistan and Bangladesh also try to influence the region from their political point of view, when the region is geographically open to these foreign influence, it is quite natural that the people cannot develop their political ideas in the right direction.

6. British Policy

The policy of some of the British officials like Parry, Robert Reid and Hutton for the creation of a crown colony in North East India was also responsible for the later political problems of North East India. Their suggestion was that the Khasi and Jaintia Hills along with all the hill districts of Assam should be excluded from the Constitution of India and be placed under a political rule as a crown colony. This led some section of the population like the Nagas to demand independence outside India. There were many other Englishmen who did great harm to India and the Nagas in particularly by making highly inflammatory speeches, thereby strengthening their suspicious and sowing the seeds of discontent. Other states like Manipur and Mizoram also joined in demanding Independence. This created confusion in the mind of the people of North East India about the development of their political ideas. The people are in between the propaganda of the Government

of India on the one side and the appeals made by the underground element on the other. As a result of this, the development of their political ideas of the people of North East India hampered.

7. Bottleneck in Communication System

Bad communication is another important factor for the slow political development of the region. Before the coming of the British to India, the whole tribal-hilly region was separated from the mainland of India. There was also no road communication among the various tribal regions. People used to walk through deep forest. The first road was constructed to link Dimapur with the military base at Manipur during the Second World War. There was also no road connection between the plains and the hills. Still now, after 40 years of Indian Independence, the road connection in the hilly regions are not good. Five states namely, Manipur. Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh have no rail connection. There is no direct air connection between these states. In a situation like this, one can easily imagine the pace of political development in the North East India.

8. Immigration

Immigration posed a great problem to North East India from the early period of the 20th Century, Immigrants were mainly from Eastern Bengal as tea-garden coolies. The immigrants sought land in the Assam valley. By 1921, nearly 90,000 acres of land bad been settled with the immigrant in the Assam valley districts. The immigrants purchased land from the people of Assam. The immigrants were mainly Muslims. Very often there were conflicts and tensions between the immigrant Muslims and the Assamese Hindus. Later on immigration posed a great problem to the political development of Assam under the name of foreigner's issue. It has greatly affected the political development of Assam. In other states like Manipur, Tripura also there are problems of immigration.

9. Poverty

Most of the states in the North-East India are very backward economically. Although the states enjoy full fledged political status as federating units in India, all, except Assam, are deficit states. Financially these states cannot stand on its own legs. They depend mainly from grants

and loans from the centre. The economic position of the people of North East India is much lower than the economic position of the people of other states. Major section of the population depend on daily earning for their livelihood. To then economic need is more important than political ideas. It may be said that people in the rural areas of the region do not know what political system we are having in India.

Poverty is also another factor for the growth of political ideas in the opposite direction, e.g. the underground movements in Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur etc. are clear examples. The people involved in these movements are more attracted towards Independence outside the Indian Union. Maoism based on Marxism and Leninism become their political ideology and demands the change of the existing Indian political system.

10. Failure of the National Political Parties

The national political parties very often failed to educate the people in the right political direction. The only national political party established before Independence in the region (Assam, Manipur and Tripura) was the Indian National Congress. After the enforcement of the Constitution of India, the party was able to form stable governments in these states for about 35 years. Enough time was given to the party to create a political atmosphere in which the people learn the political value, beliefs and culture of India. On the other hand, it has resulted in the development of regional parties e.g. the Assam Gana Parishad in Assam, the Manipur People's Party in Manipur etc. In the newly formed states like Meghalaya, the party failed to work unitedly as it was proved in the Assembly elections of February 2, 1988. The politics of dissidence and factionalism has become the normal feature of the party.

The above factors supplements each other in slowing down the pace of political development in the region. One only finds the existence of one factor or another, in varying degrees in each state of the region. The solution to all these problems lies in the combined effort of the Government, both centre and states, the people from other states outside the region, and the people of the region. More important role is to be played by the elite groups (intellectual, political economic, social) of the region in educating the common people. Their role is in between tradition and modernity, in keeping a balance between traditional values, beliefs, culture etc. and the modern trends.

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